364 certain rent-free lands. Moreover, every morning the womenfolk
351 of each house sweep and clean that portion of the lane which lies directly in front of their own house, sprinkle it with water or water mixed with cow-dung and often decorate the entrance with designs drawn with millet or rice flour. Notwithstanding this, the lanes are not always very clean. The reasons for this are many. The Yetti Madigas do not sweep the village very regularly; and the women, when they have finished their housework, often throw the refuse
[514] into the public thoroughfare. Thirdly, very few people have latrines in their houses, and even those who have them are inclined to make their children ease themselves at the side of the
[23] road. However, the pigs kept by the Erkala caste as well as the large number of dogs in the village are good scavengers and help to keep the village clean.

4. THE HOUSES

342 The dwellings in Shamirpet can be classified into three main
351 groups: the Bhawanti, the Penkutillu and the Gudse.

The Bhawanti. This is a large house with stone walls and tiled roofs; it generally stands in its own compound, which is surrounded by a wall, and invariably has five to six rooms. The following account of the house of I.R., a woman with considerable local influence and a good-sized agricultural holding, will illustrate this type of house. As we enter the gate in the compound wall we find ourselves in front of an open space which constitutes
[372] the courtyard of the house. On one side of this courtyard there is a cattle-shed, the end of which is partitioned off as a store-room for fuel-cakes made of cow-dung. Opposite the gate across the courtyard is a verandah running the whole length of the house; at one end of this verandah there is a small room in which agricultural
[15] implements are kept. The main door of the house leads into an inner court which is open to the sky. In the centre is a stone-lined sink, known as *gachhu*, which can be drained and cleaned, and here, sitting on small wooden stools, the women of the house bath. The inner court is surrounded on three sides by rooms; on one side there are two inter-connected rooms, the first being used as a dining-room and the second as a kitchen. Opposite this, running the whole length of the inner court, is a long room, while opposite to the main house door and across the inner court is a door which

1: Dube E-5 (1951-52) 1955 AW17 Telugu AW17

it is used for the growing of vegetables, specially fruit-bearing creepers, and throughout the year it is used by the household fowls. Similarly, in most of these houses the cattle-shed is very close to the main living-room. Hardly half a dozen houses in the village have latrines; the majority of the people go out into the fields or behind the rocks for answering the call of nature. Notwithstanding some variety, the decorative designs found on all the houses follow a generally established pattern. The floors are swept twice every day in almost all the houses. The mud floor is periodically smeared with cow-dung mixed with water and the walls are washed annually with lime or coloured earth. Grain and provisions are stored in large receptacles made either by the potter and well burnt to a vermilion red or by the Erkala in their traditional styles of basket-work.

All the houses in Shamirpet can be classed into one of these three types. The Gudse-type huts of the Erkalas are, however, a class by themselves. These small, circular huts, made from sheets of weed-matting, are about twenty feet in diameter and are often only six feet high. The interior is unpartitioned and serves as bedroom, dining-room, living-room and kitchen. Pigs and poultry are housed in similar but smaller round huts built in the immediate vicinity of the dwelling-hut.

From time to time groups of families belonging to the nomadic castes come to the village. These have their low, portable huts, which are mostly made of folding bamboo screens. Almost every month some group belonging to this category makes its appearance in Shamirpet and after a stay of a week or so moves off with its huts, dogs and pigs.

5. THE NEIGHBOURHOOD OF SHAMIRPET

The nearness of Shamirpet to the cities of Hyderabad and Secundrabad has been mentioned. People holding small government posts or having urban relations make periodic visits to the city. Others, especially young men, cycle down to Secundrabad or Hyderabad to visit the cinema or to look at the shops.

In the broad social sense, however, Shamirpet's more intimate ties are with the villages in the neighbourhood. In the events and developments of these villages the people of Shamirpet are very keenly interested. The hamlets of Babugura and Upparpalli are

Thus while most of the major Panchayats did not collect at the highest rates possible, but struggled to devise ways and means of either escaping it or levying it at the lowest rates possible, the majority of the minor Panchayats evaded it altogether. 651 661

Scavenging Fees: Public health and conservancy were the obligatory duties of the Panchayats. They provided public latrines for males and females in almost all the major Panchayats, and got them cleansed by the Panchayat scavengers. They also extended their service to private latrines and charged the house-holders at particular rates except in cases of Panchayats where scavengers were independent of Panchayats as in Vizagapatam District. (column 5.) 614 651

This amenity was provided mostly by major Panchayats, while the minor Panchayats lagged behind. But the fees that were being collected by Panchayats varied from one to the other in several respects, such as the base the rate, the period for which they were collected, and the institutional discrimination they showed.

There was no uniformity in the rates of scavanging fees collected in several Panchayats. But the fees collected varied from Panchayat to Panchayat of the same and different grades in each and every district. Again the fixation of rate was not based on any rational basis, except according to the fancy of the individual Panchayat Board concerned. Sometimes the fees were charged per latrine, sometimes on the number of members in the family, sometimes according to an arbitrary distinction of big and small families, in some instances the rates were per mensem, and in others they were charged on a quarterly basis. Some Panchayats distinguished between different categories of institutions like office, police lines, schools, union areas and private families and charged separate rates for separate institutions. In some cases the scavenging rates were made a part of the assessment on house tax as in the Ceded Districts.

In the Ceded Districts of Anantpur and Kurnool, scavenging fees were also collected on the basis of rates of house tax: as Re. 1, Rs. 1-8-0 and Rs. 2 per quarter per latrine. In Bellary, the Kampli Panchayat collected only Re. 0-3-0 per latrine, while Rayadrug had arranged a regular scale related with the capital valuation of the house at Re. 0-6-0, Re. 0-12-0 and Re. 1 per quarter per latrine, according to the capital value of the house Rs. 800, Rs. 800 to Rs. 3000, and Rs. 3000 and over respectively. In West Godavari, the basis of collection was still different in the 3rd grade Panchayats as in Ganapavaram and Undi. In Ganapavaram, the rates

651 514 were Re. 0-12-0 and Re. 1 per mensem for a latrine for cleaning once and twice separately. In Undi the scavenging fees were in a gradation to the members of the family as Re. 0-8-0 for four members, Re. 0-10-0 for four to eight members, Re. 0-12-0 to Re. 1 for eight to twelve members per mensem and Rs. 1-8-0 per rice mill. In Akividu, the rates were based on the individual ability of the families and institutions, i. e. Rs. 9 for all factories, Rs. 6 for latrines of all big families; Rs. 3 for latrines of moderate families, and Rs. 2-4-0 for latrines of ordinary families, and Rs. 1-2-0 for other families. Even here, the division was purely arbitrary and there was no clear cut basis on which these differentiations were made.

In Kistna District, the Panchayats like Kantaram had altogether dispensed with the idea of scavenging service as they had provided bore-hole latrines, while in other Panchayats the same variations in scavenging fees continued.

In Vizagapatam, there was always the difficulty of procuring the services of the scavengers by the Panchayat. In Bobbili and Salur, people had to depend upon the services of the private scavengers. Here the rates were observed to be varying according to the bargaining power of the parties from Re. 0-6-0 to Rs. 1-8-0 per latrine per mensem. In other Panchayats, where the scavenging services were provided through them, the rates were based either on capital valuation of the house or number of persons in the family.

In the Ceded Districts, there was no problem of scarcity or non-availability of scavengers for the Panchayat service. In Kurnool, some of the Panchayats like Dhone and Maddikera made it a habit to relate public scavenging fees to the house tax, with variations ranging from Re. 0-4-0 to Rs. 1-8-0 per mensem.

The question of variations of rates did not arise in the case of minor Panchayats, as most of them did not utilize private scavenging services at all, except in a few instances. Most of the minor Panchayats investigated in East and West Godavari Districts, Kistna, Vizagapatam and the Ceded Districts had not got any private scavenging amenities provided by the Panchayat. Even when it was provided, as in Palivela and Kothapeta in East Godavari, the rates were Re. 0-12-0 per latrine per month in the former while in the latter they started from Re. 0-12-0 Rs. 2-4-0 and Rs. 9 per quarter per latrine.

231 651 **Slaughter House Fees**: Slaughter house fees constituted another important source of income to all major Panchayats, and

transfer of immovable property, collected and credited by the Registration Department after deducting the collection charge. But the Panchayats had to agitate as yet a lot before they could get this income. Data reveals a few stray cases like Bhimavaram in West Godavari in the 1st grade Panchayats, Vuyyuru and Jaggyapeta in Kistna getting Rs. 25,000, Rs. 4,000 and Rs. 2,000, respectively. In West Godavari Velpur got Rs. 1,200. Peatapadu got Rs. 2,000, in Vizagapatam, Parvatipuram got Rs. 2,000, etc. (Column 25.) 651

The complete advantage of this source of income was not taken and when completely enforced this would do much to improve the financial side of the Panchayats.

Magisterial Fines: Magisterial fines were not a big source of income. The fines imposed for offences committed against the Madras Local Boards Act were credited to the Panchayats, after deducting about 10% for collection expenses. (Column 51.)

Vehicle Tax: Vehicle Tax, if properly imposed and collected is capable of yielding a good revenue for most of the Panchayats. However, neither the major nor the minor Panchayats were collecting this with any regularity. In fact, the Panchayats which were actually imposing tax were only a few here and there scattered throughout the State. The income of some of them from this source ranged from Rs. 16,000 to Rs. 24,000 per annum, but others got negligible amounts not exceeding a thousand rupees.

Even though the inspector of Local Boards and the District and Assistant Panchayat Officers who supervised the working of Panchayats had often suggested that this source of income should be more thoroughly exploited, the response of the Panchayats remained to be most unsatisfactory. When the major Panchayats themselvas did not try to exploit this source, the minor Panchayats which usually looked to the lead of the major Panchayats could by no means be encouraged to tap this source of income.

This however could only be made up by declaring the imposition of this tax as obligatory on the part of the Panchayats instead of leaving it to their discretion.

Bore-hole Machine Rentals: Bore-hole latrines were found on a large scale in a few Panchayats in Kistna District, and there alone the Panchayat got some income by lending the machine to the local people. (Column 39.) 651 514

651
[514] The sanitary agency in the Panchayats should encourage bore-hole latrines, where there are no Pucca Latrines, and if they buy the machine and lend it to the people, it would be a worthy encouragement.

Animal Tax: Tax on animals was a source of income again not very often tapped by most of the Panchayats except in rare instances.

Though the Panchayat in Madras were authorised to collect this tax according to sec. 154 of the M. L. B. Act of 1930, none of them were courageous enough to impose this tax for fear of popular disaffection.

Income from Grass Sales: The sale proceeds of grass on river banks were generally obtained by Panchayats by paying a lump sum to the Public Works Department, as lease amount. This was an income which was usually obtained by the minor Panchayats, as most of the major Panchayats had no grass growing areas within their local limits. On account of the disparity between the lease value paid to the P. W. Department, and the actual return from sale of grass, the minor Panchayats were able to make some profit, which, however varied from Rs. 50 to Rs. 4000. (Column 20.)

[312] As the irrigation facilities and fresh water canals and rivers are in abundance in the Delta Districts of the two Godavaries and Kistna, grass grew in abundance on the banks of rivers and canals. This was a source of income available mostly in the minor Panchayats of these areas. In other districts like Vizagapatam or the Ceded Districts, where the land was dry and water facilities were scarce, and where grass was rarely grown, this source of income was not available to Panchayats.

Fishery Rentals: Income from fishery rentals was usually derived by the Panchayats by leasing out or auctioning the right of fishing in the fresh water tanks, pounds or canals in the Panchayat areas. As such, this income was conditioned by the existence of such amenities and could be derived only by such of the Panchayats which had amidst them water sources in case they decided to exploit this income source.

This was a source of income mostly available in the minor Panchayats and rarely in the major Panchayats in Godavari, Kistna and the Ceded Districts, except in places where there were huge tanks or canals. (Column 21.)